ABILENE REFLECTOR

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY BY

STROTHER BROS.

THE THREE-CENT STAMP.

Good-bye, old stamp, it's nasty luck
That ends our friendship so.
When others failed you gamely stuck,
But now *you've* got to go.
So here's a flood of honest tears,
And here's an honest sigh—
Good-bye, old friend of many years—
Good-bye, old stamp, good-bye!

Your life has been a varied one,
With curious phases fraught—
Sometimes a check, sometimes a dun,
Your daily coming brought;
Smiles to a waiting lover's face,
Tears to a mother's eye,
Or joy or pain to every place—
Good-bye, old stamp, good bye!

You bravely toiled, and better men
Will vouch for what I say:
Although you have been licked, 'twas when
Your face turned t'other way;
'Twas often in a box you got
(As you will not deny)—
For going through the mails, I wot—
Good bye, old stamp, good bye!

Ah, in your last expiring breath!
The tale of years is heard—
The sound of voices hushed in death,
A mother's dying word,
A maiden's answer, soft and sweet,
A wife's regretful sigh,
The patter of a baby's feet—
Good-bye, old stamp, good-bye!

What wonder, then, that at this time
When you and I must part,
I should aspire to speak in rhyme
The promptings of my heart.
Go, bide with all those memories dear
That live when others die—
You've nobly served your purpose here—
Good-bye, old stamp, good-bye!

—*Eugene J. Field, in Chicago News.*

THE ENGINEER'S STORY.

A Midnight Experience in the White Mountains.

It had been snowing steadily all day long, not in a boisterous, tempestuous way, but quietly and persistently, as if the feathery flakes which were rapidly piling themselves one upon the other on the frozen ground had come for a long stay. Towards night the wind began to rise, and when the darkness settled down a moderate winter's storm was raging. We were waiting in the little station at L—— for the down train, telegraphed an hour and a half behind time, and were endeavoring to keep warm around the small air-tight stove which served as the only heating medium in the low-studded apartment. L—— is a place of little importance except as a railroad center, for here two trunk lines cross each other, and it is also the point where locomotives were changed on the different trains. With the exception of the bustle and excitement incident to a junction station, there was but little to attract a tourist, and the few natural charms the place possessed at this time were hidden beneath the soft covering of snow. So the weary waiters were forced by dearth of amusement, as well as the storm, to while away the time as best they could in the dingy depot. The different time-tables were perused, the flaming advertisements scrutinized, all to no purpose, for the hands of the monotonous-ticking clock crept around the dial with that tardy pace peculiar to railroad time-pieces when one is waiting for a belated train.

The conductor who was to take charge of the express came in to warm his hands by the little stove, and soon the party was increased by the engineer, whose machine could be dimly seen far down the track ready for its expected charge.

"Bad night, Bob," said the conductor. "Better come in and warm up. She won't be here for an hour yet."

The engineer made some reply, and joined the circle around the stove. He was a man of slight build, drooping shoulders, and perhaps not up to the average height. Rather effeminate at first sight, until one noticed the square firm chin, the quick, steady eyes, and the lines about the mouth, which showed that beneath that calm face and quiet manner lay the will both to do and dare. He had been selected especially to run this night express on account of the danger of the position, for the down train was frequently late, and the lost time must be made up before reaching the end of the road in order to meet connections. Time and again nothing but the coolness and judgment of the engineer had brought this train to its destination in safety, and Bob Jennings, as he was called, had been remarkably fortunate, and had never met with a serious accident. The running of the two trains up to L—— and back to the city constituted his day's work. The position was a responsible one, the remuneration good, and the "job," as the boys termed it, was looked upon with envy by Bob's fellow engineers.

After some minutes passed in conversation between the engineer and conductor, the latter suddenly remarked:

"How was it, Bob, you happened to get this express? The Superintendent of the Portland & Ogdensburg helped you to it, didn't he, on account of that affair up in the mountains? Tell us about it?"

"Yes, yes," spoke up several who had overheard the conversation. "Let us hear the story, by all means."

"Well, boys," said Bob, as he bit off a generous chew, and deposited the quid lovingly in his cheek, "it ain't much of a yarn, and it'll make you laugh, for you'll think me spooky like. Howsomever, it's as true as Gospel, and if Dan was here he'd say so, too.

"'Twas when I was running 49 on the P. & O. Road which hadn't been agoin' more'n a couple of years. You may perhaps be acquainted with the line. She runs through the White Mountain Notch, and is built right on the side of the hills. How they ever had the spunk to start such a road beats me, for at first sight it seems next to hopeless to get around some of them short curves, to say nothing of the big up-grades. Near Crawford's is that spider-like Frankenstein trestle, you've heard so much about, where the track spans a chasm eighty feet wide, and one hundred feet deep. Strong enough, I suppose, but it makes a man feel skittish to go over it for the first time. Well, my good luck is all owing to that trestle. We lived in Portland then. Nell and I. She is my wife, and we was as happy as could be. The only draw-back was that every other night I had to take the late express up to Fabyan's and come back next day on the accommodation. Nell used to be afraid to have me go, particularly as the road was new and accidents would happen spite of all we could do. I kept telling her it was safe enough, and the pay was good, so I'd better stick to my place for awhile anyway, though, to tell the truth, I didn't like the route, 'twas so awful gloomy like. No big towns to go through, only now and then a little village, and they would be as dark and quiet as a graveyard, when we struck 'em at night. Summers it wasn't so bad, but winters was awful. Well, one night in January, when it was my turn to stay in Portland, the Superintendent sent for me and said:

"Bob, there's a party of directors as wants to get through the mountains to-night, and they're going to start about ten o'clock. I'll have to send a special, but I haven't an engineer that I can trust. Now, it's your night off, I know, but if you'll pull the throttle for them fellows, I'll make it all right with you."

"'Well,' says I, 'I'll go, of course; but it's goin' to be a bad night on the mountains.'

"'That's so, Bob,' says the Super, 'but I know I can rely on you, and them directors say they must go through, anyhow.'

"So I went back to our little cottage and told Nell as how I'd got to go. She took on very queer like and seemed distressed to have me away, though she never acted like that before.

"'It's an awful night, Bob,' says she, 'can't they send some one else? I don't like to have you go.'

"'Nonsense,' says I, 'the storm won't hurt me, and I'll be back again to-morrow. The Super's promised to do the square thing, and it will come out all right.'

"She seemed a little reassured, and I got out my great coat and muffler, and in 'em I prepared to start out.

"'Well, Bob,' says my wife 'if you must go, why you must, but,' she added, thoughtfully, and there was the queerest look passed over her face 'be careful of that Fankenstein, trestle.'

"I scarcely heard what she said, but bidding her good-bye was soon on my way to the round-house. It was a wild night and no mistake; seems to me I have never seen it blow harder or snow faster. Once or twice I had to turn my back to the blast to keep from blowin' over. Well, I was soon on board my machine, and backing into the station, hitched on to two cars which were to make up the train. As ten o'clock approached the directors began to arrive, pompous looking men, with plenty of money and feeling all their importance.

"Them fellers,' says I to myself, 'feel their steam pretty well. I don't suppose they'd look at an engineer.'

"Dan Smith, my fireman, was on the watch for the conductor's signal, and when the clock struck ten we got the swing of the lantern and off we started.

"I've seen some pretty bad nights, but that one was the worst I ever remember. The storm to-night is hard enough, but it don't begin to blow as it did then. Why, every now and then we would get a blast that would make the whole machine tremble, and as the country round Portland is pretty level, we took the full force of the wind. As we got further inland, it wasn't so bad, and by the time we were forty miles out, it had turned to a summer's gale and was pouring torrents.

"And now comes the singular part of the story. We had the right of way, and our dispatcher was to keep the whole up to Fabyan's open for us, my instructions being to stop only at North Conway for water. So I gave her the throttle, and we bowled along at a good rate of speed, making, perhaps, thirty or thirty-five miles an hour. As we went whistling through Sebago Lake station I had a kind of feeling come over me that there was something wrong. I didn't notice it at first, but every now and then it would come back to me that all was not as it should be, yet I couldn't think of anything that wasn't right. I allers examine my machine before I start, give her a good oilin', look well to the bolts and parallel rods, try the levers and such, and so I knew when we left Portland old '49' was in perfect workin' trim. Yet the feelin' grew on me until it was a steady thing. I tried to shake it off, but 'twan't no use. I felt it in my bones that somethin' was up.

"Now you gentlemen will laugh at me for being a fool, and I don't blame yer, for we was a-goin' along all right, everything from the water-gauge to the cylinders was a workin' in good time, and I knew that it was only my imagination, but, to tell the truth, I began to fell uneasy. I had been an engineer for ten years, and had been through some pretty tough scrapes without blowin' for grapes, and the boys all said as how I had a good deal of pluck. Now I began to lose all confidence.

"'Bob,' said I to myself, 'this won't do. You're gettin' nervous, and all for nothin'! You've no business to be superstitious at your time of life. Brace up!'

"'Twan't no use, however. I could hev' stood up in court and sworn that there was a kink somewhere. Well, meanwhile we was sliding along, and pretty soon reached North Conway, where we was to give the machine a drink. 'Dan,' says I to my fireman, 'there's somethin' out of the way with this machine, and I don't know what it is.'

"'What makes you think so?' said Dan.

"'I can't tell,' I replied, 'she works all right; but I feel it in my bones.'

"Guess your thinkin' of your wife, returned Dan,' with a laugh.

"But while we were gettin' in the water I took a lantern and went round the engine. Looked at every part of her, rapped the bars, knocked the wheels, tried her at every point, and couldn't find nothin'.

"And I tried to think no more about it, but the feeling was there all the same, and do the best I could I wasn't able to throw it off. "Well, we had got a pretty good distance in the mountains, and with that light load '49' didn't make nothin' of the up grades.

"Perhaps, gentleman, you have never been through the hills in winter. It's some different from summer. I can tell yer. The mountains loom up dark and solemn, and with their snow-covered sides they seem kinder like big, ghostly giants that have been turned to stone standing guard over the valley. The silence and desolation sorter awes one, and it don't seem right to go shrieking and screaming along their sides in the dead o' night. This time it was worse than ever. The storm had let loose all the evil spirits in the air. The wind swept down the valley with a roar that could be heard above the rush of the train. It whistled and yelled at the cab windows, and blew the rain and sleet so hard agin the winder frame I could scarcely see the short distance it by the head-light. The great trees rocked to and fro and seemed to hold out their arms in warning. It was a solemn place for any one, and I felt it particularly as I had this awful weight of anxiety on my mind that had been agrowin' stronger and stronger each minute.

"Well, we had passed Bartlett's, goin' through there at a pretty good jog, when like a flash of lightning the parting words of my wife came back to me: 'Be careful of that Frankenstein trestle!'

"That set me to thinkin'. Could this be a presentment of some disaster? Was there anything the matter with the bridge?

"'Nonsense, says I, 'I'm a natural-born fool. If anything was wrong the train two hours ahead would have found it out and signaled me at Bartlett's. I'll think of it no more, but tend to business.'

"But in spite of me, 'be careful of the Frankenstine trestle,' kept comin' into my head; even the wind seemed to shriek it. I pictured to myself a broken rail and the yawning gulf on each side. What a terrible accident it would make: what a frightful chasm in which to plunge. Then I remembered Nell, and the queer look that came over her face when she gave me that singular caution: 'Be careful of the Frankenstine trestle.' We was a nearin' the bridge, sure enough. On the up grade '49' was making ab ut twenty miles an hour, and in less than ten minutes he would be over the bridge, or— I caught my breath, for at that moment those warning words flashed into my mind once more.

"'If I'm ever to be cured of such stuff,' says I to myself, 'now's my chance. What could Nell know about the bridge? I'll put her across at full speed.'

"A tall white birch that stood on a spur of the mountain was the landmark which showed me that we was acomin' to the straight piece which led across the bridge. I put my hand on the throttle to open the valve, when—

"Well, gentlemen, I don't suppose you'll believe me, but as true as I'm standin' here, my wife's voice whispered in my ear '*not that one, Bob, the brake!*'

"It gave me such a start that before I knew what I did I had opened the Westinghouse for all she was worth, and the train came to a standstill in less than two lengths. Not wa tin' to answer any questions from Dan, I grabbed my lantern and rushed up the track to the bridge and walked along the middle plank until I reached the other side, and then back again. Not a thing was out of place, every rail secure, and the bridge was as sound as when first put up!

"Idiot!" cried I, 'so much for your foolish nonsense. This freak will cost you your job."

"I could see the lights of the conductor and brakeman, who had with a number of passengers come out to see what was the matter. How the boys would laugh, I thought. I should never hear the last of it. I was sneakin' back to the cab, when I came to the switch of a short siding that had been laid, on which to run gravel cars. It warn't a very long track, not more than a hundred odd feet, and ended within a couple of yards of the precipice. Noticin' somethin' peculiar, I held up my lantern and found a large tree that had just blown down and fallen against the switch rod, breakin' the fastening and throwin' the rails of the main line into the siding!

"'I tell you, boys, it made my hair stand on end. In two minutes that whole train and them directors would a gone off that cliff, and not a one would have lived to tell about it!'

"'What's the row, Bob?' says the conductor.

"'Row enough,' says I, 'look at that switch. I reckon I pulled her up just in time.'

"Great Heavens!' exclaimed a fat director who was standing by. 'Where does that track lead to?'

"'To the other world,' says I, 'and we came almighty near makin' the trip!'

"'Well, you never see a more grateful set of men. They made up a purse of five hundred dollars on the spot, and when we got to Fabyan's they telegraphed the Super as how I was to stay with them during the excursion, and I went to all the sights in Montreal with 'em just as though I had been one of the regular party. Not content with that, they gave me an elegant gold watch and chain, the President of the road, who happened to be among 'em, making a neat speech. I tell you a peep into the jaws of death will put rich and poor men on the same level, nothing like it to take the bigness out of them.

"'Well, the boys all made a lion of me when I got back to Portland, and Nell never seemed so glad to see me. That night's work was the making of me, for the Super gave me a good show and finally I got this job. I never told the boys why I stopped the train, for I knew they would laugh at me, and I don't know as I told my wife for a long time. One day, however, she came to me and says:

"Bob, I had a queer dream about you, the night of that affair at the Frankenstein. I dreamed I was on the engine with you somewhere and we was agoin' at a frightful rate. Way in the distance I saw what seemed to be a big gulf, and you thought by gettin' good headway you could jump it. I knew, of course, you couldn't, so when you started to open the throttle I said: '*Not that one, the brake!*' then I woke up."

"I told her than the whole story, and gentlemen whenever I hear a similar yarn, and I've heard a number of 'em, I don't turn up my nose and say nonsense! There's more in one's feelings than most people think, for, leastwise, minding my feelings saved my neck that night on the Frankenstein trestle. There comes the express; good-night."

—*Edward H. Crosby, in Boston Courier.*

HOME, FARM AND GARDEN.

—Butter for winter use is best packed in stone jars.—*Chicago Journal.*

—Salt fish are quickest and best freshened by soaking in sour milk.

—Removing tan: A wash to remove tan is made of sliced cucumbers soaked in milk, applied nightly to the hands and face and left to dry on.—*The Household.*

—Oil and place under cover, after thoroughly cleaning, all farm implements and machinery with which you are through for the season.—*Troy (N. Y.) Times.*

—A good garden and small orchard, well taken care of, pay more than any acre on the farm, besides the luxury, benefit, pleasure and health it gives to the family.—*Cincinnati Times.*

—Galled and sore shoulders in horses are often caused by the mane working under the collar while pulling. This can be avoided by plaiting the mane and tying it up in such a manner that it can not touch the collar. It not only injures the shoulder but the mane also, which is one of the beauties of the horse. —*N. Y. Post.*

—An able author says: "Pickles are exceedingly unhealthy as articles of food, and often cause acute dyspepsia. Young ladies addicted to their free use may be assured that they must certainly part with their favorite dainty or bid farewell to good digestion. Cucumbers preserved with salt and vinegar are next to impossible of digestion."

—An appetizing entree is made by taking cold boiled cabbage; chop it fine; for a medium-sized pudding-dish full add two well-beaten eggs, a tablespoonful of butter, three tablespoonfuls of cream, with pepper and salt *ad libitum*. Butter the pudding dish, put the cabbage in and bake until brown. This may be eaten cold, but it is much better if served hot. It is especially good with roast pork or pork chops.—*N. Y. Post.*

—Cream Candy: "Place a large cupful of white sugar, granulated is the best, in a porcelain kettle, with three tablespoonfuls of water, and let it dissolve at the back of the stove, then set it forward, and let boil until it will crisp in water. Stir in a teaspoonful of rose or vanilla extract, and half a teaspoonful of cream of tartar, pour it into a buttered pan or platter, and when cool work it until it is perfectly white, cut it in little squares and set it away to dry.—*Exchange.*

—Beefsteak Pickled: Lay a steak in a pudding dish, with slices of onions, a few cloves, whole pepper, salt, and bay leaf a sprig of thyme, one of marjoram, and some parsley, add oil and tarragon vinegar in equal parts, just to come up to the steak, and let it steep in this for about twelve hours, turning it occasionally; then either broil it or fry it in butter, and serve with mashed potatoes. It may also be slightly fried in butter, and then stewed with a little common stock, and served with piquante sauce.—*Boston Post.*

Digging and Storing Potatoes.

As a rule, we do not believe in allowing potatoes to remain in the ground long after they are ripe. They are more liable to rot, while those near the surface are exposed to the air, become green and bitter, and unfit for use. The dying of the stalk indicates that the tubers are ready for the harvest, and they should be dug when the soil is dry; they are then clean and bright and ready either for the market or to be put away under cover. If dug in rainy weather, or when the soil is very heavy, the dirt will adhere to them, they are much more liable to rot and not nearly as marketable. Go into the vegetable market, and you will notice that the smooth, dry and clean potatoes will always be selected first.

Dug in fair weather, potatoes will soon become dry, and when they are so, they can not be gathered up and put into the shade too quickly. Exposure to the sunlight very soon produces a chemical change which renders the tuber unfit for use. The starch is changed to grape sugar, the tuber becomes green, looses its crispness, and when cooked is neither mealy nor agreeable to the taste. If dug early, it may not be best to store them in the cellar at once, lest they gather moisture and rot. They may be spread in a cool shed or barn, and covered with straw until the weather becomes cool enough to put them in the cellar with safety. The shrinkage of potatoes between the time of digging and the following spring amounts to from ten to twenty per cent., and this should be taken into account in marketing them. Freshly dug potatoes are three-fourths water, but evaporation slowly takes place during the winter and spring, reducing the watery portion, and rendering the tuber of greater relative value as food. The old method of storing potatoes in pits is nearly abandoned, though it may still be practiced in newly-settled portions of the country. We can well remember when the "potato hole" was an institution on almost every farm, and it was regarded as a good method of keeping them through the winter. If well stored, they always came out nice in the spring, but that was before the days of the potato rot, and the system might not prove as satisfactory now.

A good potato cellar should be dry, capable of being made perfectly dark and of being quickly and thoroughly ventilated. If the cellar is thoroughly dry, the tubers might be stored upon the floor, but this is not generally the case, and it is usually best to construct bins whose floor is raised somewhat above the cellar bottom. Board partitions may be used to separate varieties: there is much less danger of rot in this arrangement, and a greater opportunity is given to pick them over in case rotting should begin. Temperature is one of the factors in keeping a potato. The germinating power of a potato is injured, if not destroyed, when exposed to a temperature below thirty degrees, and it commences to grow at a temperature above fifty degrees. Then a cellar that could be kept within this range, or better still, from thirty-two to forty degrees, ought to furnish sound potatoes until spring, and that would sprout freely. A light sprinkling of lime upon potatoes when stored is a preventive against potato rot. Potato rot is a parasitic fungus, and the lime destroys the germ.—*Maine Farmer.*

PERSONAL AND LITERARY.

—Ex-Senator Sharon confesses to have an income of $100,000 a month.

—The famous pianist, Dr. Hans Von Bulow, has become the inmate of a lunatic asylum.

—Mr. Spurgeon's publisher is said to have sold 320,000 copies of "John Ploughman's Talk."

—Mr. MacVeagh is going to write up his six months' experience in the Garfield Cabinet.—*Philadelphia Press.*

—From the fact that she calls it "dear America" now, the Louisville *Courier-Journal* infers that Mrs. Langtry is learning to be a great actress.

—Texas has a little girl lecturer, Jennie Scott by name, who is a prodigy. She is seven years old, and speaks most learnedly on many subjects. She has never been to school.—*Chicago Herald.*

—Miss Leslie Ayer, daughter of the late James Ayer, of patent medicine celebrity, is the latest American target for the aim of impecunious foreign Counts. The young woman, with her dot of $5,000,000, receives much attention in the aristocratic circles of Paris.—*N. Y. Herald.*

—There was a happy family reunion in Polk County, Ore., a few days ago, Mrs. Nancy Liggett, of Missouri, having gone thither to meet her three sisters, whom she had not seen for forty-five years. She is seventy-five years old, and her sisters are: Mrs. Kinsey, aged seventy; Mrs. Clark, aged sixty-nine, and Mrs. Price, aged sixty-seven. —*Chicago Journal.*

—A Brahma missionary to England gives this description of John Bright: "John Bright eats his breakfast like a lion, and digests it, too; but he doesn't drink. He is a broad, middle-sized man, with great soft hands and an enormous appetite. I have seen him finish off the plentiful morning meal with a half jug of milk and a good lump of sugar, which he puts into his mouth somewhat surreptitiously."

—The widow of Rev. Elkanah Walker is probably the sole survivor of the women who rode across the plains to Oregon on horseback in the early days. She resides at Forest Grove, in that State, and is still in good health. The saddle on which she rode across the plains forty-five years ago is still in her possession. Her son, C. H. Walker, the oldest white person born in Oregon, was with her in Portland on the day of the recent railroad parade.—*N. Y. Post.*

HUMOROUS.

—Dramatic—a garret where liquor is sold.—*The Judge.*

—"One good turn deserves another," as the tug-boat Captain said to the bridge-tender.

—How may a vein be likened to a dry book? In its being opened only in cases of extreme necessity.

—An advertiser of very cheap shoes recently blurted out the real truth in mistake—thus: "N. B. Ladies wishing those cheap shoes will do well to call soon, as they will not last long."—*Detroit Post.*

—The widow of a Scotch Duke is about to be married to a New York ex-editor. We are glad to see that the nobility doesn't consider itself incapable of improving its condition.—*Merchant Traveller.*

—"A Georgia man has raised a peach that weighs a pound." If a Georgia man can't raise a peach weighing more than a pound he must be pretty weak. We have fifteen-year-old boys in this vicinity who can "raise" a pumpkin weighing one hundred pounds.—*Norristown Herald.*

—"You ought to be in our room now," said Amy; "we have a teacher that rules the roost." "Well," replied the High School girl, "I'd be ashamed of myself; you should say: 'governs the horizontal perch on which the fowl reposes,' not 'rules the roost.'"—*Oil City Derrick.*

—"My son Willyim," said a fond mother, "uster be pretty wild as a boy, but since he went West he's sorter turned over a new leaf and got steady. He's getting along well, to, for I see his name in the papers—they say he's been a road agent doing a large business, and that his fellow-citizens organized a neck-tie sociable in his honor recently. I am so glad that Willyim is getting up in the world."—*Rochester Post-Express.*

—A little four-year-old was taken on a visit to grandmamma in the country. There, for the first time, he had a near view of a cow. He would stand and look on while the man milked, and ask all manner of questions. In this way he learned that the long crooked branches on the cow's head were called horns. Now the little fellow knew of only one kind of horn, and a few days after obtaining this information, hearing a strange kind of bellowing noise in the yard, he ran out to ascertain its cause. In a few minutes he returned, with wonder and delight depicted on his countenance, exclaiming: "Mamma! mamma! Oh, do come out here! The cow's blowing her horns!"—*Harper's Bazar.*

Injustice in the Courts.

"How are you and your wife coming on?"

"We are not coming on at all. She played me the meanest kind of a trick."

"Used your razor to point a lead pencil?"

"Worse than that."

"What was it?"

"We had a little dispute, and some of her hair came out in my hand."

"Is that the meanest thing she did?"

"No, she did worse than that. She had me arrested for pulling out her hair."

"Served you just right."

"But that's not all. She produced in court a bundle of hair as big as a wig, and she swore that I had pulled it all out in that little dispute."

"I suppose you did; didn't you?"

"No, sir. She had been six months collecting that hair. Every time I came home a little high, and pulled out some of her hair, she gathered it and laid it by until she had a wad as big as my hat. I expect I pulled her hair forty different times. She pretended that I had pulled it out all at once, and the Judge wouldn't listen to my explanations, but sentenced me to be imprisoned for a month. O, there is no justice in this country."—*Texas Siftings.*

UNCONSTITUTIONAL.

The United States Supreme Court Declares the Civil Rights Bill Unconstitutional, Justice Harlan Alone Dissenting—The Law Reviewed.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 15.

The most important decision rendered by the Supreme Court of the United States today was that in five cases commonly known as Civil Rights cases, which were submitted to the Court on printed arguments about a year ago. The titles of these cases and the States from which they came are as follows: No. 1, United States against Murray Stanley, from the United States Circuit Court of the District of Kansas; No. 2, United States against Michael Ryan, from the United States Circuit Court of the District of California; No. 3, United States against Samuel Nichols, from the United States Circuit Court of the Western District of Missouri; No. 26, United States against Samuel D. Singleton, from the United States Circuit Court of the Southern District of New York, and No. 28, Richard A. Robinson and wife against the Memphis & Charleston Railroad Company, from the United States Circuit Court for the District of Tennessee. These cases were all based on the first and second sections of the Civil Rights Act of 1875, and were respectively prosecutions under that act for not admitting certain colored persons to equal accommodations and privileges in inns or hotels, in railroad cars and in theaters. The defense set up in every case was the alleged unconstitutionality of the law. The first and second sections of the act, which were the parts directly in controversy, are as follows:

SECTION 1. That all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges of inns, public conveyances on land and water, theaters and other places of public amusement, subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law and applicable alike to citizens of every race and color, regardless of any previous condition of servitude.

The second section provides that any person who violates the first section shall be liable to forfeit $500 for each offense, to be recovered in civil action, and also to a penalty of from $500 to $1,000 fine, or imprisonment for from thirty days to a year, to be enforced in criminal prosecution.

Exclusive jurisdiction is given to District and Circuit Courts of the United States in cases arising under the law.

The rights and privileges claimed by and denied to colored persons in these cases were full and equal accommodations in hotels, in ladies' cars on railway trains, and in the dress-circle in theaters.

OPINION OF THE COURT.

The Court, in a long and carefully prepared opinion delivered by Justice Bradley, holds:

1. That Congress had no constitutional authority to pass the sections in question under either the Thirteenth or Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

2. That the Fourteenth Amendment is prohibitory upon States only, and that the legislation authorized to be adopted by Congress for enforcing that amendment is not direct legislation as to matters respecting which States are prohibited from making or enforcing certain laws ordaining certain acts, but is corrective legislation, necessary or proper for counteracting and redressing the effect of such law or acts. That in forbidding States, for example, to deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law, and giving Congress the power to enforce the prohibition, it was not intended to give Congress power to provide due process of law for the protection of life, liberty and property (which would embrace almost all subjects of legislation), but to provide modes of redress for counteracting the operation and effect of State laws.

3. That the Thirteenth Amendment gives no power to Congress to pass the sections referred to, because that amendment relates only to slavery and involuntary servitude, which it abolishes, and gives Congress power to pass laws for its enforcement; that this power only extends to the subject matter of the amendment itself, namely, slavery and involuntary servitude, and the necessary incidents and consequences of these conditions; that it has nothing to do with different races or colors, but only refers to slavery, the legal equality of different races and classes of citizens being provided for in the Fourteenth Amendment, which prohibits States from doing anything to interfere with such equality; that it is not infringement of the Thirteenth Amendment to refuse to any person equal accommodations and privileges at an inn or public place of entertainment, however it may be a violation of his legal rights; that it imposes upon him no badge of slavery or involuntary servitude which imply some sort of subjection of one person to another, and incapacity incident thereto, such as inability to hold property, to make contracts, to be parties in court, etc., and that if the original Civil Rights Act which abolished these incapacities might be supported by the Thirteenth Amendment it does not therefore follow that the act of 1877 can be supported by it.

4. That the decision affects only the validity of the law in States, and not in the Territories or the District of Columbia, where the legislative power of Congress is unlimited, and it does not undertake to decide what Congress might or might not do under power to regulate commerce with foreign nations and amongst the several States, the law not being drawn with any such view.

5. That, therefore, it is the opinion of the Court that the first and second sections of the act of Congress, March 1, 1877, entitled "An act to protect all citizens in their civil and legal rights," are unconstitutional and void, and judgment should be rendered upon the indictments accordingly.

At the conclusion of the reading of Justice Bradley's opinion, which occupied more than an hour, Justice Harlan said, under ordinary circumstances and in an ordinary case he should hesitate to set up his individual opinion in opposition to that of his eight colleagues, but in view of what he thought the people of this country wished to accomplish, what they tried to accomplish, and what they believed they had accomplished by means of this legislation, he must express his dissent from the opinion of the Court. He had not had time since hearing that opinion to prepare a statement of the grounds of his dissent, but he should prepare and file one as soon as possible, and in the meantime desired to put upon record this expression of his individual judgment.

A Thrilling Experience—Two Men Drowned.

AUSTIN, TEX., Oct. 15.

The ferryboat this afternoon carrying two wagons and a hack bearing Mrs. Hughes and two children, Mrs. Renn and four children, Mr. Robert Willis and two men, attempted to cross the Colorado River. The cable broke and the boat floated rapidly toward the dam over which an immense volume of water was falling several feet. Before the dam was reached a skiff rescued Mrs. Renn and two of the children. One of the teams jumped off and swam ashore. The two men attempted the same feat, and both were drowned. The others remained aboard, and went over the dam with the boat; miraculously, none were drowned. All were promptly picked up by small boats.